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AN EARLY ROMANTIC NOVEL

In the course of an investigation of early fiction, I chanced upon a rare novel, by a little-known author, which seems of considerable importance, both to the history of fiction, and to the history of the English Romantic Movement in general. The establishment of the comparatively early date at which the novel was written, and the verification of certain sources of influence which helped to mould the author's personal philosophy, leave us in possession of a literary phenomenon unimportant in itself, but to some extent subversive of widely accepted ideas. For, in its attitude toward nature and toward common man, in its absorption in a thesis, and in its emphasis upon sentiment, the novel is an anticipation of thoughts and feelings generally assumed to have developed in England a quarter of a century or more after this novel appeared, and to have found expression in fiction as a result of specific influences active during the last quarter of the century.

The novel, in two volumes, is announced on the title page of the first volume of my edition as follows:

"FELICIA TO CHARLOTTE: BEING LETTERS FROM A Young LADY in the Country, TO Her FRIEND in Town. CONTAINING A Series of the most interesting Events, interspersed with Moral Reflections; chiefly tending to prove, that the *Seeds* of VIRTUE are implanted in the Mind of EVERY Reasonable Being. LONDON: Printed for R. GRIFFITHS at the *Dunciad* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*; and G. WOODFALL at the *King's Arms, Charing-Cross*. M.DCC.XLIX.

The title page of the second volume is of interest because of its variation from that of the first. It reads:

"LETTERS FROM FELICIA TO CHARLOTTE: VOLUME SECOND. BY THE AUTHOR OF THE FIRST VOLUME. LONDON: Printed for J. PAYNE, and J. BOUQUET, IN PATER NOSTER ROW. M,DCC,XLIX.

It is to be noted that in the second volume, both the form of the title and the name of the publisher have changed, but the date of publication is the same. The two volumes are in uniform calf binding. The name of the author, Mrs. Mary (Mitchell) Collyer, is written in script with pencil upon the title pages.

I have found no reference to either the author or the novel in standard handbooks of the novel or of eighteenth century literature.¹³

¹³ Since this study was prepared I have found further data about Mrs. Collyer and other works of hers. This information, which I hope to present at some later

In the *Dictionary of National Biography*, I find a brief account of Mary Collyer who died in 1763, an authoress, the wife of Joseph Collyer the elder, principally known as the translator of Gesner's *Death of Abel* (1761), which attained to "numerous editions in England, Scotland, and Ireland." She "published in 1750 *Letters from Felicia to Charlotte*, which recommended her to the notice of Mrs. Montague, Miss Talbot, and Mrs. Carter. The latter spoke of her to Mrs. Montague as "writing for the support of her family—a laudable employment." She afterwards translated Klopstock's *Messiah* but died before completing it. It was finished by her husband. This information is the same as that contained in an obituary of her son, Joseph Collyer the younger, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.¹

Allibone contains the following item:

"Collyer, Mary, d. 1763, wife of the preceding Joseph Collyer d. 1776. *Letters from Felicia to Charlotte*, Lon., 1750, 3 vols. 12 mo. Trans. of Gessner's *Death of Abel*, 1761, 12 mo. She commenced

time, serves to corroborate the impressions gained from the novel under discussion here.

¹"Obituary. Joseph Collyer Esq. . . . He was born in London, Sept. 14, 1748, and was the son of parents who made a considerable figure in the literary world, as translators from the German of Gesner and Bodmer, at a time when the German Language was little cultivated in this country. Mrs. Collyer, whose maiden name was Mitchell, was principally known as the translator of Gesner's "Death of Abel," published in 1762. This work was received with so much favor, as immediately to become a work of great popularity; it went through numerous editions in England, Scotland and Ireland, and still remains on the list of books intended as presents for young persons. She had, however, before this published in 1750, in two vols. "Letters from Felicia to Charlotte," which appear to have recommended her to the notice of Mrs. Montague, Miss Talbot, and Mrs. Carter. Mrs. Carter in a letter dated 1761, speaks of her to Mrs. Montague as 'writing for the support of her family; which,' she adds, 'is a laudable employment.' Mrs. Collyer afterwards translated part of Klopstock's "Messiah"; but dying in 1763, before it was completed, the remainder was translated and published by her husband, about the end of that year, in two vols. The third did not appear until 1772 when a taste for this species of poetry, or mixture of poetry and prose, was beginning to decline. Mr. Collyer afterwards translated the "Noah" of Bodmer, in 1767, and completed some other works, held in high estimation in his day, particularly "A Geographical Dictionary, or History of the World," in two vols. fol.; a "History of England," in 14 vols. 12 mo. 1774; and "The History of Sophia Sternheim," from the German, published sometime after his death which took place Feb. 20, 1776 "Gent. Mag. XCVIII pt. I (1828) p. 184. From this article the *Dic. of Nat. Biog.* doubtless gleaned its

trans. of Klopstock's *Messiah* but did not finish it. It was completed by her husband and pub. in 1763, 2 vols. 12 mo."²

It is to be noted that the reference in Allibone, as in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, is to a 1750 edition, which Allibone alone describes as in three volumes 12 mo.; whereas the edition I have access to is dated 1749, and is in two volumes, 4½ x 6½. In the catalogue of the British Museum appears a reference to *Letters from Felicia to Charlotte*, the authorship of which is ascribed to Joseph Collyer, London, 1788, 8 vo., 2 vols.

Investigation of contemporary book lists brings to light further information, as follows:

(1) The *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1744, contains this important entry in its "Register of Books published":³

"*Felicia to Charolotte: or, Letters, &c.* Price 3s. Robinson."

Here the title begins after the manner of the title of the first volume of my 1749 edition. I find only one other use of this form of the title, the form generally used being that of the second volume of my edition, as in the references already quoted. The publisher here is not the same as the publisher of my edition or of other editions listed. Most important of all, however, is the indication that one volume of the novel, and one volume only, appeared as early as 1744.

(2) In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1749, at the end of the "Register of Books published," is the following advertisement: "In press and speedily will be publish'd, *Letters from Felicia to Charlotte*. Volume second; by the author of the first. Printed for J. Payne and J. Bouquet."

This second volume, announced separately, is brought out by the same printers as the second volume of my edition.

(3) In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for January, 1750, "Register of Books published," appears the following entry:

facts, especially the date 1750 for the publication of *Felicia to Charlotte*, which Allibone also uses. The *Dic. of Nat. Biog.* and Allibone agree in giving 1761 as the date of publication of Mrs. Collyer's translation of the *Death of Abel*, whereas the obituary gives 1762. Mr. Straus gives Dec. 11, 1761 as the correct date. *Robert Dodsley Poet, Publisher and Playwright* (London and New York, 1910) p. 375.

² Allibone, *Dictionary of Authors* (Philadelphia, 1859) I, 184.

³ For this reference and certain others to periodicals, I am indebted to Mr. John M. Clapp.

"Letters from Felicia to Charlotte, vol. 2nd. By the author of the first vol. 12, 3s."

This is probably the edition referred to in October, 1749. The fact that this announcement appeared in 1750 may account for various later references to that date. The date 1749 in my edition may indicate that the volume appeared very late in the year, after the December issue of the magazine, so that the first announcement would appear in January, 1750.

(4) The *Monthly Review*, January, 1750, contains the following: "Felicia to Charlotte, or Letters from a young lady in the Country to a Friend in Town, Vol. 2. 12. Price bound 3s. Printed for Mess. Payne and Bouquet, in Pater-noster Row. The first volume of these letters was published about four years ago, and met with so favorable a reception from the public, as not only to occasion a new edition in a short time, but to encourage the ingenious author to publish a second volume; which, in our opinion, is not inferior to the first; and will, we doubt not, be as well received: But we forbear entering into more particulars concerning a work that is more peculiarly calculated for ladies than for the majority of our readers."⁴

This notice not only corroborates the statement of the *Gentleman's Magazine* of June, 1744, as to the separate appearance of the first volume, repeating the earlier form of the title, but refers also to the appearance of a "new edition in a short time" nowhere else mentioned. This may be the 1749 edition of the first volume, which I have at hand, to which I have found no specific reference.

Mr. John M. Clapp tells me of a reprint of the novel in the *Novelist's Magazine*, Vol. 23 (1789), which I have as yet been unable to find in this country. This reprint ascribes the authorship to Mr. Collyer. I cannot tell whether this is the edition listed in the British Museum catalogue, also ascribed to Mr. Collyer, or a later one.⁵

Three things are made clear by these entries which were not noted by later chroniclers: (1) that the first volume of the novel

⁴ *Monthly Review*, II (Jan. 1750) p. 229.

⁵ An obituary of Joseph Collyer, the elder indicates that in his lifetime there was some confusion concerning the authorship of the works of Mrs. Collyer and those of her husband. Here the translations from Gesner and Klopstock are accredited to the latter: "Deaths. Mr. Joseph Collyer, translator of the Messiah, and the Noah, and the Death of Abel, from the German, and author of a Dictionary of the World, a History of England, a System of Geography, and several other valuable works." *Gent. Mag.* XLVI (1776) p. 95.

appeared in 1744; (2) that this volume ran into two editions at least before 1750; (3) that the second volume appeared separately, probably late in 1749. A question suggests itself, probably too slightly founded to deserve serious consideration; that is, whether the octavo edition cited in the British Museum catalogue, and the three volume edition mentioned in Allibone, contain additions to the text after the edition of 1749 in 2 vols., 12 mo., and, therefore, a significant continuation of the story. Allibone's record of three volumes, however, may be due to misinformation or a typographical error; and the extra size of the two octavo volumes in the 1788 edition, to a difference in typography.

To answer these and some other questions, only peace and a recourse to the British Museum are necessary. In the meantime, the content of the story suggests certain possibilities in connection with the problem.

THE PLOT

The plot of the novel deals with the experiences of Felicia, a city girl, who visits relatives in the country, falls in love with a country gentleman of small means, finally overcomes her father's opposition to the match, and is married. She settles down to the well-regulated and simple pleasures of her life as the wife of a model country gentleman of advanced ideas. On the birth of a son, husband and wife turn from an interest in religion and ethics, which pervades the book up to this point, and devote themselves to most progressive ideas as to the education of children. In the last letter, Charlotte, the "Friend in Town," to whom all the other letters have been addressed, writes to Lady Harriot (introduced at this point for the purpose) that she has taken up her residence with Felicia, that she is converted unexpectedly and entirely to the joys of country life, and that she is looking forward to the happy possibility of having her child brought up with Felicia's under the beneficent tutelage of Lucius.

Volume One, first published in 1744, carries the story to the eve of Felicia's marriage, and so is complete in itself. In this volume the hero is always referred to as Lucius, without mention of his last name or that of his family. Volume Two, published five years later, begins with Felicia's retrospective account of her marriage, signed "Felicia Manly." Throughout this volume Lucius is frequently referred to as "Mr. Manly." The possibility now presents

itself that a third volume may have appeared after the appearance of the second volume, since the conclusion of Volume Two is no more decisive than the conclusion of Volume One, and perhaps less so. Such a volume, whether actually published, or merely conceived in the author's mind, affords an interesting hypothesis, since it must have dealt with the education of the two children in accordance with the advanced ideas outlined at the end of Volume Two, and made still more striking the anticipation of Rousseau and the Educational Novel of the end of the century to be pointed out later.

SOURCES

This anticipation of Rousseau which a third volume would render so striking as to be, perhaps, incredible, is significantly apparent in the two volumes at hand. As I have said, the historical interest of this novel, appearing in 1744-49, lies in its foreshadowing of ideas and feelings usually attributed to the decades after 1770. Volume Two was published in the year of Rousseau's first Dijon Discourse,⁶ twelve years before the *Novelle Heloise*⁷ and thirteen years before *Emile* and the *Contrat Social*,⁸ yet it advances ideas which at a later date we should tend to credit to the influence of those works. The fact that the book appeared complete in the same year as *Tom Jones* makes its romanticism still more unexpected. To find the possible sources of the author's ideas, we should consider: first, the author's other literary work, i. e., her translations from Gesner and Klopstock, which indicate a familiarity with the rising romanticism in Germany; and, second, the English poets whom she quotes or alludes to: Milton,⁹ Shakespeare,¹⁰ Spenser,¹¹ Thomson,¹² Parnell,¹³ and Hill,¹⁴ sources and exponents of English romanticism. In these two directions lie, probably, the source and stimulus of her romantic interests, interests doubtless intensified by natural religious inclinations, augmented by the theological activities of her time.

⁶ *Discourse sur les Sciences et les Arts*, 1749.

⁷ *Novelle Heloise*, 1761.

⁸ *Emile*, and *Contrat Social*, 1762.

⁹ *Felicia to Charlotte*, I, 58: II, 54; II, 283.

¹⁰ *Ib.* II, 173, 283.

¹¹ *Ib.* II, 283.

¹² *Ib.* I, 158; 275, 279.

¹³ *Ib.* II, 266-7.

¹⁴ *Ib.* I, 20.

Her translations suggest that she was somewhat intimately acquainted with the current literary productions and tendencies in Germany, "at a time when the German language was little cultivated in this country."¹⁵ Gesner and Klopstock belonged to a group of German literary men which included Bodmer, the translator of *Paradise Lost*¹⁶ and author of the *Noah* which Joseph Collyer translated in 1767,¹⁷ Giseke, Von Hagedorn, and Ebert. All of these men were strongly imbued with the spirit of English literature;¹⁸ they came under the influence of the early English romantic poets, especially Thomson (1700-48), as Mrs. Coffman's recent dissertation points out.¹⁹

Salomon Gesner's *Tod Abels* appeared in Germany in 1758, was translated by Huber into French in 1760, and by Mrs. Collyer into English in 1761. A follower of Thomson, Gesner was also an influential forerunner of Rousseau.²⁰ Rousseau in a letter to Huber in December, 1761, wrote of Gesner, "Je sens que votre Gesner est un homme selon mon coeur."²¹ M. Texte links Gesner's name with that of Thomson, indicating the combined influence of Thomson and Gesner on nature poetry by a quotation from Saint-Lambert's Preface to the translation of the *Seasons*: "De 1760 à la Révolution, et même au delà, Thomson et Gessner ont passé pour de grands poètes, et on a cru que 'les Anglais et les Allemands ont créé le genre de la poésie descriptive.'" ²² M. Texte goes on to say: "De 1760 à 1780 Thomson et Gessner partagent avec Rousseau la gloire

¹⁵ *Genl. Mag.* XCVIII, pt. I (1828) p. 184.

¹⁶ "Bodmer fought under Milton's banner, and in the preface to his prose translation of *Paradise Lost* (1732) he praised Shakespeare as the English Sophocles. In his "Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren" ("Treatise on the Marvellous," (1740) he asserted the claims of freedom, nature, and the inspired imagination, against the rules of the French critics, very much as the Wartons and Bishop Hurd did a few years later in England." (Bp. Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, 1762.) Beers, H. A., *A Hist. of Eng. Rom. in the Eighteenth Cent.*, (N. Y. 1910) 374-5.

¹⁷ *Gen. Mag.* XCVIII, pt. I (1828) p. 184.

¹⁸ Coffman, Bertha Reed, "The Influence of English Literature on Friederich von Hagedorn," *Mod. Phil.* XII (1914). p. 316.

¹⁹ *Ib.* 324.

²⁰ On Gesner in France, see Süpfle, Th., *Geschichte des deutschen Cultureinflusses auf Frankreich*. Goetha, 1886-95. t.I.

²¹ Texte, Joseph, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire* (Paris: Hanchett, 1895) 363.

²² *Op. cit.* 363.

d'initier le public français à la nature l'auteur des *Saisons* est un vrai poète, qui a exprimé bien avant Rousseau beaucoup de sentiments que Jean-Jacques a fait entrer dans le grand courant de notre littérature."²³ He illustrates this contention with a quotation from Thomson's Hymn at the end of the *Seasons*.

With Gesner, then, this important predecessor of Rousseau, Mrs. Collyer was familiar, as her translation of his work attests. That she was also familiar with Thomson, the literary progenitor of both Gesner and Rousseau, is shown by three quotations from him which she puts into the mouth of one of her characters.²⁴

From these two sources may well have come specific ideas and a more general point of view which suggest the influence of Rousseau as it is usually traced in later novels. Whether too much credit has been given to Rousseau for such manifestations seems now open to question.

Klopstock's *Messiah*, Books I-III, appeared in Germany in 1748; a translation of it begun by Mrs. Collyer was finished and published by her husband in 1763. Klopstock's acquaintance with the fruits of the growing romanticism in England is indicated by the correspondence between Mrs. Klopstock and Samuel Richardson.²⁵ M. Texte points out, moreover, the high approval he bestowed upon Edward Young, an approval which Mrs. Klopstock's letters reflect.

²³ Op. cit. 364.

²⁴ Fel. to Char., I. 158; I, 275; II, 279.

²⁵ *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (ed. Mrs. Barbould, London, 1804) In one letter, Mrs. Klopstock writes: "Nov. 29, 1759. Honour'd Sir, Will you permit me to take this opportunity in sending a letter to Dr. Young, to address myself to you? It is very long ago, that I wished to do it. Having finished your *Clarissa*, (oh, the heavenly book!) I believe you know my husband by Mr. Horhorst? " III, 139-40. In another she writes: "Hamburg, May 6, 1758. It is not possible, Sir, to tell you what a joy your letters give me It will be a delightful occupation for me, to make you more acquainted with my husband's poem I will, as soon as I can, translate you the argument of these ten books, and what besides I think of them. The verses of the poem are without rhymes, and are hexameter, which sort of verse my husband has been the first to introduce in our language; we being still closely attached to rhymes and iambics. I suspect the gentleman who has made you acquainted with the *Messiah*, is a certain Mr. Kaiser, of Gottigen, who has told me at his return from England what he has done And our dear Dr. Young has been so ill? But he is better, I thank God along with you Compliments of my husband, and compliments to all yours, always, even though I should not say it." III, 150-1.

The religious interest of Klopstock as well as his romanticism must obviously have been congenial to Mrs. Collyer's taste.²⁶

We may consider, then, I believe, that Mrs. Collyer derived her romantic interests, to a large extent, from the immediate fore-runners of Rousseau in England, France, and Germany, poets whose influence had already been felt in France before the voice of Jean-Jacques had been raised. The discovery of other minor works like this of Mrs. Collyer's may prove a more general susceptibility in England to these earlier influences, and further reflection of them in fiction of the day.²⁷

THE EPISTOLARY METHOD

The epistolary method of the book obviously suggests the influence of Richardson, *Pamela* having appeared four years before volume I, and *Clarissa* the year before volume II. Richardson's correspondence reveals no acquaintance between "the author of *Clarissa*" and Mrs. Collyer; but one friend they had in common, the Miss Talbot referred to in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*, who is discussed in a letter of Lady Bradshaigh's to Richardson.²⁸ It is inconceivable that any woman of the time with the interests of Mrs. Collyer could have failed to be attentive to Richardson's works, even if we did not have before us the fact of her use of his chosen method. Her use of it is not notably skilful. For the most part the story is presented from one point of view, in Felicia's letters, much as *Pamela* is, lacking the greater psychological complexity of *Clarissa*. Occasionally the hero's point of view is secured by Felicia's transcription for Charlotte's benefit of one of his brief and formal communications. At the end of volume II, a third person's point of view is secured by the sudden introduction of Charlotte's letter to Lady Harriot * * * giving us a detailed account of Felicia's situation as Charlotte sees

²⁶ Professor Beers says: "Klopstock's 'Kriegslied,' written in 1749, was in the meter of 'Chevy Chase,' which Klopstock knew through Addison's *Spectator* papers." Op. cit. 377. Mrs. Klopstock's statement as to his innovations in verse form should be noted in this connection.

²⁷ "Car beaucoup des sentiments qu'il avait exprimés étaient familiers déjà à la littérature anglaise. Avant Rousseau, Richardson, Fielding, Sterne avaient créé le roman sentimental et bourgeois . . . 'Trente ans avant Rousseau, Thomson avait exprimé tous les sentiments de Rousseau presque dans le même style.'" Taine, *Litt. Angl.* T. IV, p. 224. Quoted by Texte, op. cit. 335.

²⁸ *Correspondence*, VI, 265-269.

it. The author seems constantly conscious of the limitations of her method, more conscious than Richardson, and less skilful in introducing devices to palliate its incredibility. Many of the letters begin or end with some apology for the length, or some explanation of the circumstances which account for so full and detailed a narrative.²⁹

Though Richardson is by no means the originator of the epistolary method,³⁰ a favorite method with women and the delineators of women, yet the rapid multiplication of its users toward the end of the century, particularly among women,³¹ makes Mrs. Collyer appear, even in this respect, in the light of a pioneer.

A NOVEL OF PURPOSE

The statement of the character of the book on the title page of the first volume is of special significance. The book consists, we are told, of "A Series of the most interesting Events interspersed with moral Reflections; chiefly tending to prove, that the *Seeds of VIRTUE* are implanted in the Mind of Every Reasonable Being." This announces a double intention on the part of the author: her story is to be both a Novel of Manners, and a Novel of Purpose. As is frequently the case when purpose is an element in any literary combination, it is here the dominant element. So the character of Mrs. Collyer's novel as a Novel of Purpose deserves first and chief consideration.

During the preceding period, Purpose had worked mainly through the medium of humor and satire, in verse, essay, or drama. For instance, the contrast between the citizen of the town and the citizen of the country is brought out with the typical classical con-

²⁹ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 74, 105, 216.

³⁰ I hope to present later certain results of a study of this subject.

³¹ Brooke, Frances Mrs., *History of Lady Julia Mandeville*, London, 1763. Burney, Fanny, *Evelina, or A Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, London, 1778.

Laura and Augustus, An Authentic Story: in a Series of Letters By a Lady. London, 1784. 3 vols.

Emily Herbert, or, Perfidy Punished. A Novel in a Series of Letters. London, 1786. 3 vols.

Reeve, Clara, *The Two Mentors; A Modern Story*, 2nd ed., London, 1783.

The Twin Sisters; or, The Effect of Education: A Novel; in a Series of Letters. By a Lady. London, 1788. 4 vols.

Mackenzie, Henry, *Julia V. de Roubigné, A Tale. In a Series of Letters.* London, 1777. 2 vols.

tempt for rusticity in Shadwell's "The Squire of Alsatia" (1688). The change in the temper of the moral intention early in the eighteenth century is indicated by such plays as Steele's "Conscious Lovers" (1722), by Thomson's *Seasons* (1726), with its humanitarian discourse in an ample poetic context, and, finally, by the novels of Richardson (1740, 1748, 1753).

In Richardson's novels the purpose is of a *general* sort: to preach moral behaviour to serving maids, to well-born daughters, and to men of sentiment. The novel of *specific* purpose had its most marked development after 1770, with the appearance in rapid succession of such novels as Brooke's *Fool of Quality* (1766-70), Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771), Day's *Sandford and Merton* (1783-89), Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794), Mrs. Inchbald's *A Simple Story* (1791) and *Nature and Art* (1796), etc., etc.

Though I make no pretense to a thorough examination of the novels of purpose of the end of the century, the two most prominent novels of religious purpose seem to me to be Amory's *John Bunce* (1756), a novel in defense of unitariansim, concerned with the incredible adventures of a hero with seven successive wives, whose experiences are profusely interlarded with discussions of natural and revealed religion, to the great technical disfigurement of the book. It is conspicuously a freak. The other important novel of religious purpose is Richard Grave's *The Spiritual Quixote* (1773), an attack on Methodism, satirical in tone and method. In *Felicia to Charlotte*, twelve years earlier than *John Bunce*, and twenty-four years earlier than *The Spiritual Quixote*, we find a novel serious and dignified in tone, and not discreditable in technique when the difficulties of the author's chosen method are considered.

The book is definitely the result of the religious unrest of the preceding years: of the decadent formalism of the Church of England, and such reactions from it as the Deist Controversy and the more immediate Wesleyan revival. All these forms of faith had been given violent expression in pamphlet and sermon, but, so far as I have seen, Mrs. Collyer was the first to give them detailed expression in fiction. The author takes account of all the conflicting doctrines, and condemning them all with such restraint as befits the tolerance she advocates, seeks to advance the doctrines of a "religion of nature,"³² a term bandied about by

³² Sir Leslie Stephen says: "The whole significance of the early controversies of the century may be described by saying that they represent the struggle

previous philosophers,³³ and kept in play for some decades thereafter. Mrs. Collyer's faith is something of a compromise among the conflicting ideals of her own time. In the course of a satirical sermon on swearing, Lucius contemns the deists in this wise:

"Ye deists rejoice in these your friends! Admit them into your societies! They, like you, can darken truth, they have assisted you in setting fragment against fragment; and when the dazzling sun beams shine too bright, can wisely close their eyes. Let me, too, be permitted to rank myself on this side, and countenanced by such great authorities, to take a text that suits my present purpose, regardless of every other passage that may be supposed to contradict it; nay, regardless of the text itself, any more than it may serve as a plausible introduction to what I have to offer."³⁴

The Roman Catholic he portrays in the same connection as the man who

"endeavors, with the most elaborate eloquence, to prove that the bible he preaches from is a book not fit to be read, that it never was designed for the instruction of such block-heads as his audience, who, by looking into it, incur damnation. What concerns all to know, must be read by none but the priest, or whom he shall appoint. How glorious that revelation, which in the hands of the multitude, points the way to misery, but in those of the church to eternal life."³⁵

The gloomy dogmas of evangelicalism, the formalism of Protestant orthodoxy, and the current ridicule of all religious feeling, is reflected in a conversation between Lucius and Felicia soon after their marriage:

"My dear Felicia, said he, I am going to make myself appear to you in a very ridiculous light; Custom makes us ashamed of our duty; we are ashamed of uttering solemn important truths, though of the greatest moment³⁶

between the religion of nature and the traditional religion." *Hist. of Eng. Thought in the Eighteenth Cent.* (3rd ed., London and New York, 1902) II, 448.

³³ William Wollaston published in 1722 a treatise entitled "The Religion of Nature Delineated" which reached a sixth edition by 1738. Sir Leslie Stephen says of Wollaston that he "admits the doctrine of a particular Providence, and of the efficacy of prayer, but seeks to reconcile them with a philosophical view of the uniform order of nature." *Ib.* II, 130.

³⁴ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 199-200.

³⁵ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 198.

³⁶ Greene quotes Montesquieu as saying on his visit to England, "Everyone laughs if one talks of religion." *Short Hist. of the Eng. People* (N. Y. and London, 1898) p. 736.

Will you join with me in adoring the kind sovereign of the world? . . . Shall we not with united hearts, at once express the full sentiments of our souls, and keep alive the pious ardors that long for utterance? Shall we not, by petitioning the continuance of his mercy, implant and cherish those dispositions, that will make us more worthy of that mercy? . . . Said I, I ought to perhaps reproach myself with want of that sensibility which you express, with a warmth which I own is very affecting. I have heard prayer ridiculed, and you must excuse me if I say, I am afraid I should look upon it as a few moments passed in a very irksome manner. There is something so solemn and gloomy in the very idea of these set devotions that almost fright me. Let us banish, said he with a smile, the gloom of superstition, and religion will then appear all over amiable. . . . Prayer is one of the first duties, dictated by natural religion, the elder sister of Christianity . . . a duty enjoined by Christianity, and enforced by the example of our great law-giver himself."³⁷

The Puritan doctrines of election, and predestination, and conversion are held up to scorn in the character of "Prudilla," the elderly spinster whose spurious chastity suggests most strikingly the character of Miss Bridget Allworthy, introduced to the reading public in the same year:

"She let us know that she had had a pious education, and a very early experimental sense of religion. That as she was converted betimes, as she thought then, though now she doubted it, she had always a great abhorrence of vice; . . . "My religious principles are very different from yours; or rather I question whether you have any at all. However, you are a moral man; and if mere morality could save you, you bid fairer than most others for happiness. The morality of the best of us is imperfect, and, therefore, not fit to justify us in the sight of God."³⁸

In spite of her scathing portraits of the followers of Catholicism, Deism, and orthodox and evangelical Protestantism, the author advocates toleration. She alludes to "the incomparable Mr. Locke's piece," the Letter on Toleration, and deprecates "uniformity of sentiment."³⁹ The "religion of nature" or the "religion of common sense" which the book advocates is discussed in detail in various conversations dealing with the nature of the deity, prayer, immortality, etc. It is outlined by Lucius, in a general way, early in the story. From this exposition I wish to

³⁷ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 57-59.

³⁸ *Loc. cit.*, 147-8.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 257.

quote at considerable length, because it serves to illustrate certain romantic qualities in the doctrine, of which I shall make further use:

"From the clergy we digressed to religion, an easy transition; when the errors of Christianity sanctified by the venerable name of orthodoxy were proved inconsistent with reason, with all our ideas of moral beauty, and natural harmony; with all those engaging portraits of the deity, with the swell of humanity which expands our bosoms, refines our ideas, and makes us partake of the divine pleasures of beneficence and conscious virtue, with the kindly impressions we everywhere receive from a view of nature, equally lovely in all her works, and equally conspiring to a universal happiness; and in short, with the plainest discoveries of that revelation which we acknowledge to be divine. Man, the noblest part of this lower creation, said Lucius, is sunk from the dignity of his being, and represented as naturally incapable of pleasing by his actions, his kind and benevolent maker. What a reflection on the divine artificer! Our very virtues are crimes, and the most perfect use of all our powers, merits no other reward than eternal damnation! What a preposterous opinion to think of pleasing the creator by degrading his works! But the beneficent father of the universe has been so far from cursing his offspring by inspiring them with such baleful, envenomed dispositions, that he has strongly connected by the very frame of our minds, vice and cruelty with hate, and shame, and horror: virtue with a thousand charms, and a thousand lovely attractions. Supreme and unrivaled in glory he creates, to communicate happiness, and forms a wondrous scale of beings, widely to extend the glorious emanations of his goodness. He makes it their duty to be happy, and the glory of each individual, like him, to diffuse happiness around him This is the religion of Nature; the generous, the friendly religion of the Bible."⁴⁰

There is to be noted, then, in the foregoing exposition of the religion of nature, (1) its bearing upon the humanitarian aspect of the Romantic Movement in the phrases, "the swell of humanity," and "the divine pleasures of beneficence and conscious virtue"; (2) the interest in nature "equally lovely in all her works"; (3) the dignity of man, based on the doctrine of innate virtue; (4) the emphasis on feeling, subjectivity.⁴¹

⁴⁰ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 195 ff.

⁴¹ The two later religious novels mentioned deal with some of the same points. *John Bunloe* refers to "natural religion the foundation and support of revelation," and to the perfection of God and his desire for man's happiness. *The Spiritual Quixote* refers to the decay of natural piety in the society of the day, and the Christian duty of benevolence and humanity.

It is not only the fact that Mrs. Collyer is using the novel definitely as a vehicle of religious purpose that makes her work important, but also the details in the development of her ideas of the religion of nature, which mark her novel as a forerunner in the romanticism of the eighteenth century.⁴²

In speaking of Wesley's revision of Brooke's *Fool of Quality*, the *Cambridge History of English Literature* says:

"The importance of this is to remind us of the bond which unites the literary with the religious revival of the eighteenth century. It is, of course, only in a small number of writers—Collins, Smart, Cowper, for instance, that the two strands are visibly interwoven. But it is probable that the emotional appeal of the religious revival was an awakening force to many writers, whether poet or novelist, who in the outward order of their lives, were indifferent or even hostile to the 'enthusiasm' either of the Methodist or the evangelical."⁴³

By this novel, so little known, Mrs. Collyer unites herself with this group of pioneer poets hitherto marked off in revered isolation. The novel suggests, moreover, that further study may bring to light other recruits from the ranks of those minor prose writers who in any age are apt to reflect most truly the spirit of the day.

Advocates of religious reform, like Mrs. Collyer, pass easily from ideas of religious tolerance, to ideas of individual freedom in other fields; from a religion of love, to a glorification of feeling; from a religion appealing to the reason of the individual, to a break with authority, political and social; from a sense of innate virtue, to a sense of the dignity and value of every human soul, and, therefore, to democratic and humanitarian ideals.

⁴² "We should note that the reawakening of the religious impulse, the deepening of the religious feeling in the attempt to make Christianity subjective, was closely connected, in Germany and England alike, with the rise of romanticism. The religious revival had shown itself in the general life of Europe, and most markedly in England, before it went into literature. Pietism in Germany and the evangelical movement in England helped greatly to prepare the ground for the new spirit in poetry, while the earlier English religious movement of the seventeenth century had laid the great foundation of the new spirit. The deep-seated purpose of these English sects to break down the slavery of superficial fashion and cramping customs and to restore individual responsibility, spiritual initiative, and personal autonomy, reminds one strongly of the Storm and Stress period in Germany. Man himself, his inherited divine rights, and his eternal destiny were put in the place of sacred and time-honored systems." Margaret Lewis Bailey, *Milton and Jacob Boehme*, (Oxford University Press, 1914.) 175-6.

⁴³ C. H. E. L., X, 66.

A NOVEL OF FEELING

In its interest, then, in emotions of religious devotion, of domestic affection, of social benevolence; and finally in that "sensitivity" which Mrs. Radcliffe defined as a "dangerous quality which is continually extracting the excess of misery or delight from every surrounding object,"⁴⁴ Mrs. Collyer's novel anticipates the Novel of Feeling. She anticipates, moreover, what we have considered a late stage of this novel for Professor Raleigh points out that it was "late in the century, and especially after the French Revolution" that "a school of novelists who cultivated sentiment for its own sake became rapidly merged . . . in the theoretical school that cultivated sentiment in order to show how superior are the impulses of the heart to the artificial canons of society . . . For Rousseau, the great precursor of the Romantic Movement enlisted sentiment in the service of theory, and from his time onward, they are seldom apart."⁴⁵

The relation of the religious revival to the reign of feeling has been pointed out, but perhaps somewhat less emphatically than other aspects of the Romantic Movement. As Sir Leslie Stephen has said, "We may trace the growth of sentiment far back in the century. Wesleyanism was, in one sense, a development of sentimentality."⁴⁶ We have already shown that *Felicia to Charlotte* is primarily a purpose novel, of religious interest, for the most part. In the characterization and incident by means of which this interest is developed, the novel parallels frequently such extreme examples of the Novel of Feeling as Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771).

On the first meeting between Lucius and Felicia, we are told: "Here he glanced his eyes upon me as if to anticipate my answer; but immediately cast them down to the ground, and I think a sigh escaped him."⁴⁷ On his first call, the conversation turned to "a subject that afforded the young gentleman a happy opportunity of discovering the delicacy of his sentiments."⁴⁸

In appearance he is at variance with the artificial conventions of contemporary literature and society, conventions which, however,

⁴⁴ Raleigh, Walter, *The English Novel*, (5th ed., N. Y., 1911) 161.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 202-3.

⁴⁶ Op. cit. II, 437.

⁴⁷ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 14.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 1, 19.

had already received some satiric treatment at the hands of Addison and Pope:

"His stature is much too short for the hero of a romance, who ought at least to be six feet high. His complexion is lively, his eyes blue and sparkling, and so very expressive that they seem to discover in the strongest manner all the sensations of the heart the most lively traces of all that is humane, friendly, and benevolent, mixed with an engaging modesty and simplicity of manner. His hair (for he is so unpolite as not to wear a wig) is of dark brunette and hangs in natural curls, which just touch his shoulders. As to his thoughts, they seem bent on the improvement of his mind, and the love of truth and virtue (antiquated perfections) are so deeply impressed there, that he seems to have very little idea of those fancied charms, those fashionable accomplishments, which are necessary to form the character of a fine gentleman. Nay, the awkward creature does not seem to have the least idea of the art of handling a snuff-box with grace; does not even know how to murder the reputation of those who are absent, or to flatter those who are present."⁴⁹

At the first obstacle to the success of his suit, Lucius appears thus:

"He stood thus with his face toward me, leaning upon the back of a chair, his eyes cast down with dejected confusion, then lifting them up to the ceiling with an air of despair. I perceived his face pale, a tear rolled down his cheek, which he endeavored to conceal by hastily pulling out his handkerchief and walking to the door, when having stayed there a minute to recover himself, he suddenly took leave to return home."⁵⁰

This hero would seem to belong to one of the successors of Sterne, rather than to a novelist writing fifteen years before the appearance of the first volume of *Tristram Shandy*.

When Lucius congratulates the heroine on her recovery from a fever, we are told that:

"A fear of saying too much made him say too little while a starting tear and a glance the most charmingly tender made me at once interpret his meaning."⁵¹

Again the hero is lachrymose:

"his eyes swell'd with a starting tear, which with conscious dignity and shame he endeavored to call back, as a mark of a too effeminate weakness. Every speaking feature describ'd the strong emotion which agitated his soul with all the torturing agonies that can arise with the tenderest despair."⁵²

⁴⁹ Ibid. 1, 22-23.

⁵⁰ Ibid. I, 74.

⁵¹ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 109.

⁵² Ibid. I, 155.

On one of his charitable visits to a tenant,

"Lucius was so extremely affected at the moving expressive tone and artless simplicity with which the poor man told his distress, that he could scarcely refrain from tears."⁵³

When the heroine faints, her cousin describes Lucius's condition:

"With his eyes fix'd on your faded cheeks, while the tears ran down his, that with his fright wanted little of being as pale as your own."⁵⁴

Finally when the obdurate father approves the match, we find that,

"with a rapidity as quick as thought, he threw himself at my uncle's feet. He was unable to speak; he grasped his hand, wetted it with his tears."⁵⁵

The father then concludes the affecting scene:

"God bless you both, my children, cried he, lifting up his eyes while the tears stole down his cheeks."⁵⁶

In some respects, this hero may suggest Sir Charles Grandison, but I think that in none of Richardson's male characters do we find the excess of sensibility with which he endowed his heroines. His men are still masters, even of themselves. It is in the later sentimental novels that we find heroes whose benevolence leads them to relinquish self-mastery as well.

The sensibility of the heroine is nearly, but not quite, a match for the hero's, throughout these scenes. She shows off most strikingly, however, in the scenes with her irate parent. Filial duty was an ideal dear to the heart of the romantic novelists from Richardson to Mrs. Opie.⁵⁷ The scenes between Felicia and her father bear striking resemblance to similar scenes in *Clarissa*, both

⁵³ Ibid. II, 70.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 266-7.

⁵⁵ Ibid, I, 273.

⁵⁶ Ibid, I, 274.

⁵⁷ Opie, Amelia, *The Father and Daughter*, London, 1801. Richardson in a letter to Lady Bradshaigh shows the popularity of such situations as Mrs. Collyer makes use of: "Aug. 1, 1750. Dear Madame, I send the scene your ladyship asked after. Scene-Dramatic. A Father and Daughter. . . . The half-mute daughter I have imagined standing before her half-vehement, but more than half-worthy father. Arguments of this nature in books, dramatic stories, etc., always turn in favor of the amorous girl, and against the supposed tyrannical parent. I was willing to draw a juster but not unnatural scene, with a view to do right to both, and mingle instruction and warning in it." Then follows the dialogue at considerable length. *Correspondence*, VI, 29-30.

in the emotions expressed, and in the dramatic action; but they are surcharged with an amount of obvious feeling such as even the great master of tearful sentiment seldom approximated. One such scene is described as follows:

"Forgetful of my fears, every care was in an instant swallow'd up by my duty; my heart glow'd with affection. It is my father! it is my father! I cry'd aloud. He lifted up his eyes and saw me, when starting from the window, I ran down stairs with utmost eagerness to embrace him. I met him in the hall. I flew into his arms, when turning from me to avoid my embrace, he desir'd me coldly to walk in; but at the same time gave a sigh, and fixed upon me a look which discovered how much he suffered by this restraint. Ah, Madam! you can't conceive what a shock this behaviour gave me. I burst into tears, and went into the parlor follow'd by Amelia. . . . I was interrupted in this bitter complaint which was intermingled with sighs and tears, by hearing my father at the door, who enter'd the room just as Amelia was going to endeavor to comfort me. She sat near me, with her look fix'd upon mine; he saw us both in a moving situation, and when we lifted up our eyes to his, the mutual tears that for a moment almost stopp'd our sight, trickl'd down our cheeks, and seem'd to make a strong impression on his countenance. When turning to my aunt who stood behind him at the door, he told her, he desired to be a few minutes alone with me. At this Amelia arose, and after pressing my hand with the utmost tenderness, retir'd with my aunt.

My father as if he knew not how to behave, and perhaps wanted time to compose his mind in order to treat me with a sternness suitable to the subject of his complaint, . . . took a few turns about the room with the appearance of the utmost disorder; but at last growing more composed, he fastened the door and seated himself by me, giving me a fix'd look, which had a mixture of anger and sensibility, while I held down my head, drown'd in tears, and almost stifled with my sighs; and indeed I was so intimidated by his presence, that I hardly durst lift up a glance to observe his countenance. . . .

. . . I could not bear these unjust reflections.—But the same moment, observing the agitation of my father's countenance, and reflecting on what he now suffered for me, I dissolved in affection, and with a precipitation, inspired by a sudden impulse of soul, threw myself at his feet. Hear me, Sir, hear me, cry'd I, with a resolution inspir'd by my own innocence . . . Here, throwing me a letter and arising hastily, he withdrew to the door with an air that show'd him not in the least soften'd at the simplicity of my behaviour: when stopping short, as if blaming himself for leaving me on the floor, he returned with an equal speed to help me up. . . ."⁵⁸

⁵⁸ I, 204-209.

Yet the Cambridge *History of English Literature* implies that sentiment was an element new to the decades 1760-80!⁵⁹

THE ROMANTIC INTEREST IN NATURE

The inevitable relation of the religious revival to the revival of interest in nature⁶⁰ is suggested in *John Bunce*:

"This gave me a due affection toward the infinitely perfect Parent of Nature: and as I contemplated his glorious works, I was obliged in transports to confess that he deserved our love and admiration."⁶¹

Sir Leslie Stephen refers to "the blending of the two streams of sentiment: of the religious unction of Wesleyanism and that vaguer enthusiasm for nature represented soon afterwards by Ossian and by Rousseau."⁶²

In regard to this romantic interest in nature which Mrs. Collyer displays, four points should be considered: (1) her interest in landscape, involving the technical use of scene; (2) her interest in country people; (3) her sense of the superiority of country life; (4) her theories of education growing out of her "back to nature" propaganda.

How closely these four aspects of her attitude toward nature are representative of Rousseau's doctrine, and of the proposals of the later novelists, and how early Mrs. Collyer's expression of them

⁵⁹ "What are the new elements which these years added to the novel? In the hands of Sterne and a group of writers who, though it may be without sufficient reason, are commonly treated as disciples of Sterne, sentiment began to count for more than had hitherto been held allowable. . . . A little more of personality a great deal more of emotion and sentiment, may come into their work than any novelist before Sterne would have thought possible." C. H. E. L., X, 51.

⁶⁰ Professor Phelps quotes from a letter of the poet Gray's on the Grande Chartreuse, written in 1739: "Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are scenes that would awe an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument." *The English Romantic Movement*, (Boston; Ginn and Company, n.d.) p. 169.

⁶¹ Amory, *John Bunce*, (London, 1756) III, 7. Professor Reynolds writes in regard to this book: "The *Life of John Bunce*, is notable in the present study because nearly all the adventures occur among the mountains of Westmorland In the midst of absurdities and impossibilities, there are occasional passages of effective description, and of real appreciation of mountain scenery. It is an entirely new note in fiction." *The Treatment of Nature in English Poetry*, (Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 1909) p. 208.

⁶² Op. cit. II, 439.

appeared, is suggested by Professor Raleigh's summary of "the return to nature" movement. He writes: "Toward the end of the eighteenth century, theory was rife in England, and speculation on politics, religion, marriage, and education, were not slow to find expression in the novel. . . . The fundamental conception of Rousseau's work is to be found in the exaltation of 'the state of nature.' 'The return to nature' sometimes insisted upon as the essence of the romantic movement in England, may mean almost anything—residence in the country, the unrestrained expression of emotion, or the violent levelling of social distinctions. It was largely due to Rousseau that it came to mean all three, and that a love of natural scenery became inextricably associated with rebellion against political institutions and social canons."⁶³

The first extended description of landscape comes early in the book, in the second letter. The author evidently feels that some apologies are necessary for what might appear to her readers as a digression. The foot-note in which she justifies herself for it, is interesting in that it shows the contemporary attitude toward the "romantic," and also a surprising attempt at exact, localized description, on the author's part. She says:

"Lest this description should be thought romantic, the editor thinks himself obliged to inform the public, that this and the rest of the landscapes, are actually situated near Nottingham; and that these ladies, he supposes, resided in a village not far distant from that town."⁶⁴

Some days after her arrival, Felicia with her cousin Amelia starts out to "take an airing in the coach," but Felicia early shows a rare susceptibility to the natural beauty about her:

"We had not gone far before the stillness of the air, and the novelty of the prospect to me, induced us to walk. A sandy rock out of which was cut huge caverns that seemed ready to fall,"⁶⁵

⁶³ *Op. cit.* 238-240.

⁶⁴ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 9.

⁶⁵ The specific accuracy of this account is suggested by scientific descriptions of the locality: "The rock is often cut into chambers and passages with which the city of Nottingham abounds, of which Mortimer's hole in the Castle Rock is one. . . . In the cliff overlooking the Leen . . . are numerous recesses cut in an excavated chamber. . . . A very large excavation was made in the eighteenth century in the rock on the Mansfield Road for extracting sand for sale." *The Victoria History of the Counties of England; Nottinghamshire*, (London, n. d.) I, 22.

was on our left, and by a delightful contrast, set off the spacious meadows and fields, which on our right, extended an inconceivable distance, where our sight was only bounded by a clear sky that seemed to meet the ground, and in some places by hills, which could hardly be distinguished from the gilded clouds in which they wrapped themselves. Our eyes at one view took in abundance of little villages, which arising from among the trees at a great distance, agreeably diversified this delightful landscape.

"Whilst we walked on discoursing on several agreeable subjects, I observed that the scene presently changed, and the frightful precipices terminated in a high and steep hill,⁶⁶ so full of small trees and shrubs, that it formed a most delightful grove. The grass here was mixed with beds of violets and primroses, which diffused a charming fragrance through the air. Here we sat down to refresh ourselves on the banks of a small fountain, which with gentle murmur ran from a small cavity under the hill, and having drank some of the water out of a bason which was chained to the side of it, we struck into a narrow winding path, and began to mount the eminence to take in a larger view of the vernal beauties of this delightful scene; when I observed a fine river* which with serpentine meanders, added to the beauty of the whole. But while we were listening to the different warbling of a number of birds of various kinds, and observing the rabbits scudding along, and skipping at our approach into their burrows, we were interrupted," etc.⁶⁷

Here they come upon the hero, as yet unknown, indulging in a rhapsodic monologue, beginning, "O Nature! how beautiful, how lovely are all thy works!"

Not only is this description remarkable for the minuteness and accuracy of certain details, but also because of its extended and sympathetic treatment of nature, a practice very rare at this time, as the results of Miss Reynolds' study show.⁶⁸

Later Felicia and a friend, with a proper romantic desire for solitude,

"resolved to take a little turn in the field. . . . We stepped into the garden, and from thence into a retired walk,

⁶⁶ cf. Baedeker, *Great Britain* (7th ed., 1910) 389. "Nottingham . . . is pleasantly situated on the steep slope of a sandstone hill, near the junction of the small river Leen with the Trent."

⁶⁷ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 8-10.

⁶⁸ "We have now passed the middle of the century and there has not been in the works of fiction mentioned a single passage indicating any close observation or love of nature, and hardly a passage showing any knowledge of nature except as found in parks and gardens." *Op. Cit.*, 208.

*"The river Trent."

. . . . A gentle breeze that whispered among the trees, the fragrance of the air, and the awful silence of the evening, contributed to soften my mind; and charm my senses." And then follows a quotation from Milton.⁶⁹

Another extensive description takes on an added interest because we may check up the accuracy of some of its details. Felicia goes with a party to visit the estate of Lord M***.⁷⁰ She writes: "At last, however, arriving at the park of my Lord M*** we by common consent decided to walk to the house. As soon as I stepped out of the coach, I could not help being extremely delighted with the agreeable scene which lay before us, and which I can't, for my life, help giving you some description of. Here the intermixture of dusky groves and lightsome plains; of woods impervious to the rays of the sun, which now spread his chearing beams around us, and the agreeable openings which now discovered the bounding deer flying to the covert of the shady thicket, presented a landscape the most pleasingly rural and worthy the attention of the most curious observer; while we found ourselves at the entrance of a grand walk, which extended to a prodigious length, grew insensibly narrower, till closing in perspective, the vizio seemed lost in the grove, out of which arose, as if by enchantment, several lofty stone turrets, which I afterwards found were part of a magnificent gothic edifice, built after a most extraordinary taste. In fact, the whole scene, notwithstanding its being very delightful, had such a romantic appearance, that for some minutes I could think of nothing but castles and embowering shades, arising spontaneously to the charms of music; of the work of fairies, and the power of necromancy."⁷¹

⁶⁹ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 58. Professor Beers says, "The influence of Milton's minor poetry becomes noticeable in the fifth decade of the century, and in the work of a new group of lyric poets; Collins, Gray, Mason, and the brothers Joseph and Thomas Warton. To all these Milton was master." *A Hist. of Eng. Rom. in the Eighteenth Cent.*, (N. Y., 1905) 151. That Milton's influence was far more potent in the first half of the eighteenth century than is usually assumed, may yet be shown. In this connection see chapter VI on "Romanticism" in Miss Margaret Lewis Bailey's *Milton and Jacob Boehme*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1914.

⁷⁰ Cf. Baedeker, 300. "About 2M. to the W. of Nottingham is Woolaton Hall, the seat of Lord Middleton, a fine Elizabethan mansion, said to have been designed by John of Padua; in the park is a famous row of limes."

⁷¹ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 91-2. Professor Phelps writes: "Everyone knows how low the word 'Gothic' had sunk in the Augustan age It was not until after 1750 that Gothicism showed any signs of coming again into favor. . . . Horace Walpole wrote to Sir Horace Mann, January 10, 1750, 'I am going to build a little Gothic castle at Strawberry Hill.' After this date his letters contain many references to the 'Castle' and to 'gothic' things in general." *Op. cit.*, 14.

The party then "fell insensibly into moralizing on the various beauties of nature," and kept it up for twelve pages. The purely social aspects of the occasion are summed up briefly in the words: "We were entertained with much politeness by my Lord; when having drank tea, we drove home."

This description of Lord M***'s garden must be compared with that of Felicia's own, and the change wrought in it after her marriage:

"The situation is indeed charming, being surrounded with woods and groves, which on the one side must in the summer season, appear extremely delightful, as the other does so now, tho' in the midst of frost and snow. *There* will be the triumph of nature; *here* is the boast of art. *There* that uncultivated wildness, which pleases without method, and without design, charming most where the easy confusion, and agreeable disorder, render art superfluous, and labour vain: *here* all the ornaments that art, in despite of nature, can bestow.

In the front is a tall and stately wood, composed of oaks, venerable with age, with no other opening but a large area, and a visto which carries the eye from the center of the building to a considerable distance. Here the intermingled branches must I fancy, in the summer season, cast a shade, varied with all the degrees of light, from the bright sunbeam, glittering through the boughs, to the dusky gloom of sober twilight.

Behind the main building is a garden, of considerable extent; which, even in this season of the year, has its beauties. To take no notice of the parterre, which lies next the house; the hedges, resembling walls, adorned at proper distances, with pilasters, which, with eternal verdure, branch into all the decorations of architecture. In the midst of each walk, along an opening, on either hand, the eye is carried through a number of triumphal arches, composed of the same leafy materials, and which, leading to the extremity of the garden, are bounded by several fine alcoves, the painting of which, tho' injured by time, have a very agreeable effect. In some of the squares composed by these walks are fishponds, in others, groves of fruit trees, and in others, knots of flowers of various forms, which, in the season for these fragrant ornaments, must I fancy be very delightful. In the middle of the garden, where all the avenues meet, upon a very high ascent, is a summer-house, the windows of which, as well as the walls, are so covered with evergreens, that the faint obstructed light spreads a gloom perfectly soothing; while the clusters of shining berries, half covered with snow, hanging against the glass, with frosted leaves of intermingled silver and green, seem to give the lye to the season, and to join in one view Christmas and Autumn. At the entrance is a guard of giants, with their massy clubs resting on the ground;

harmless monsters! that I can view without the least trembling. 'Tis true they themselves appear in some disorder, for want of pruning: their heads and bodies are covered with a number of luxuriant branches, and, even their fingers are grown, near half a yard, beyond the just proportion, that ought to be allowed them."⁷²

The classicism of this garden is uncongenial to the tastes of Lucius and Felicia. She says of it:

"'Tis true, there is something disagreeably formal, in the studied regularity that reigns here, statues, obelisks, and triumphal arches are but awkwardly mimicked in box and yeugh: but still they find work for some labouring hands, who might otherwise want the means of subsistence; and, for this reason, Lucius may possibly continue them in their present situation, with only a few alterations, in order to render the whole more easy, free, and natural."⁷³

The changes which they later make in the garden Felicia explains at almost as great length. The sociological motive which combines with the aesthetic one to inspire the changes is an interesting symptom of the social awakening:

"He has laid a plan for making considerable alterations in the garden. To serve the poor, he has already levelled giants with the ground, demolished enchanted castles, and will shortly, by an arrangement of more natural beauties, utterly banish the *phantastical*; which like the Chinese paintings⁷⁴ can only please by showing a kind of resemblance of nature, in the most whimsical and natural proportions. The choicest flowers, instead of being deposited in knots, are to be carelessly strewn among the short grass; and, being mingled with every species that adorns the fields, will, in the most beautiful manner, brocade the velvet carpet. . . . Thus, in those seasons, when the rain or the frost, withhold sub-

⁷² *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 37-40.

⁷³ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 40.

⁷⁴ Cf. this allusion to oriental art, with other speeches in the novel, showing a romantic interest in remote lands, and in some cases a growing cosmopolitanism and sense of universal brotherhood: ". . . . of more value than Peruvian mines," II, 257; "Methinks I see him still and still see the blaze of humanity darting from his eyes; when he added; In this view let us regard the whole world. The honest Turk shall be my friend, the sober faithful Chinese, that lays the divine Confusius to his heart, and the Indian of either world, blest with simple innocence, and native truth, shall be my brother. Wherever I find a man who loves his God, and loves mankind, I will hug him to my heart," II, 258; "He considers man as man, and himself as a citizen of the world, and they both regard the whole universe, however varied by the complexion of different regions, however distinguished by religions, customs, and manners, as having a reciprocal claim to benevolence, and the kindest acts of humanity." II, 304.

sistence from the families of our poor tenants, we shall always find them employment, till they can return again to their usual labours. By this means our most agreeable accommodations will become of extensive benefit, and our very amusements, accompanied with the most pleasing sensations, which result from a calm, undisturbed, benevolence."⁷⁵

Yet Mrs. Barbauld in her preface to Mrs. Charlotte Smith's *Old Manor House*, (1793) in the British Novelists Series, writes: "There is much beauty in the descriptive scenery which Mrs. Smith was one of the first to introduce."⁷⁶ And Professor Raleigh writes that, "The remaining contribution of Mrs. Radcliffe to romantic method is to be found in her employment of scenery. Nowhere but from the poets could she have borrowed this."⁷⁷

A NOVEL OF MANNERS

The author shows an interest in country life from various points of view. In the accounts of the daily routine in the household in which Felicia is visiting, of the calls made and returned, the walks and drives, and, finally, the wedding festivities, she gives a picture, more or less detailed, of the life of the country gentry. But obviously her main preoccupation is with the lives of humbler folk. The story reveals an interest, (1) in humble virtues, to be connected with her doctrine of the innate virtue "implanted in the Mind of EVERY Reasonable Being";⁷⁸ and (2) in novelties of manners and customs of the country people. Thus we see again the two-fold point of view which distinguishes her whole novel: an absorption in both purpose and manners. Indeed observation of her treatment of the characters and incidents of country life, suggest that we are dealing with the Novel of Manners of the *Evelina* type reversed:⁷⁹ in that the story deals, not

⁷⁵ II, 180. 181.

⁷⁶ Smith, Mrs. Charlotte, *Old Manor House*, (British Novelists Series ed. Mrs. Barbauld; London: 1820) vol. XXXVI, p. vi.

⁷⁷ *English Novel*, 232.

⁷⁸ Lucius says: "In order then to form a right judgment of mankind . . . mankind in general must be the subject of our examination. We must extend our views and glance upon the virtues and vices of all the known world. And here we shall find the greatest reason for an universal benevolence; we shall see with pleasure a noble simplicity of manners, and an integrity of heart, delightfully conspicuous amid the barbarism of ignorance, and the superstition of wild uncultivated nations." *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 94.

⁷⁹ Mrs. Collyer's work suggests the need of some qualification to the statement of the *Cambridge History of English Literature*: "The novel of home life,

as does *Evelina* and other stories, with the experiences of a country girl introduced into the distracting novelties of city life, but with a city girl equally impressed by the joys of life in the country. Through this situation which involves the portrayal of several types of rural society, of the home-life of a country family, of the wholesomeness of country adventures, and of the beauties of country landscapes, she makes way for her unremitting argument in favor of the advantages of country life, arguing much as does the Indian poet Tagore today: "In the city life man naturally directs the concentrated light of his mental vision upon his own life and works, and this creates an artificial dislocation between himself and the Universal Nature within whose bosom he lies."⁸⁰

Considerable attention is given to the social responsibility of the landlord. Felicia writes:

"My father before he took his leave of us had several times hinted to Lucius that it would be no disadvantageous employment for him, to learn the characters and manners of his tenants, and even of the poor residing on his estate: that he ought particularly to enquire into their circumstances, and that, as his interest was closely connected with theirs, to endeavor to serve them to the utmost of his power."⁸¹

As a result, Lucius, in disguise, makes personal visits to various tenants; in her account of these visits, Felicia gives sympathetic descriptions of various peasant types, with glimpses of their home-life, and of the conditions under which they labor. On one occasion, through a misunderstanding of their intentions, a superstitious rustic takes Lucius and his man for devils come to tempt him. This incident the author uses as an illustration of country credulity, superstition, and love of the supernatural, and as a text to show, after the manner of Clara Reeve, how what appears supernatural may be merely a misapprehension of entirely legitimate phenomena. Lucius's comment on the situation is,

it is not too much to say, is the creation of Fanny Burney the first writer to see that the ordinary embarrassments of a girl's life would bear to be taken for the main theme to a novel. 'To her we owe not only *Evelina* *Cecelia*, and *Camilla*, but also *Mansfield Park* and *The Absentee*.' When Macaulay ended his estimate of Miss Burney with these words, he said better than he knew. He was thinking of her as the first of a long line of women novelists. He forgot that the innovation applied not only to her sex, but to her theme." X. 73-74.

⁸⁰ Sādahanā, (New York, 1914) 5.

⁸¹ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 62.

"No matter though they paint me in the character of the devil, the portrait they give of me is so unlike the original, that I shall never be known by it. If poor Robin is already such a monster, what must he be by tomorrow morning, when the story will be spread thro' the whole country, and everyone has added some dreadful circumstance to the fiction."⁸²

The author displays a keen interest in country dialects. Feeling, however, that such exact knowledge on the part of her city-bred heroine is incongruous, she introduces an explanation of it:

"You may think it strange, Madam," writes Felicia, "tho' Lucius should relate the discourse of the farmers, in the dialect of the country, I should have memory sufficient to retain the pronunciation; and, from this remark, you infer, that I have had more regard to your diversion, than to the veracity of an historian. But here you are greatly mistaken; you ought to consider the difficulty of living in the country without catching the peculiarities of the language. This I have sufficiently obtained. So that I have nothing more to do, than to remember the words: the pronunciation I have already. I have a good deal of the country accent in my ordinary conversation, and, whenever I am disposed to it, can talk in the true dialect, almost as fluently as the sprightly milkmaid, or the wife of the plowman."⁸³

The conversation of one of the farmers who comes to see Lucius is annotated in a footnote as follows:

"*You*, in this country, carries with it, something of the idea of a compliment, as expressing more respect than *Yo*; and, for this reason, husbands and wives, in particular, who on, common occasions, politely, as they think, make use of the word *You*, whenever they quarrel, constantly contract it into *Yo*. This is an observation particularly recommended to the consideration, of that ingenious gentleman, the compiler of the English dictionary,⁸⁴ now in the press."⁸⁵

"My neam, and my naunt; other counties say gaffer and gammer."⁸⁶

Werriday, she says, is "a word of nearly the same meaning as well-a-day,"⁸⁷

"And then they make the door after him." Footnote: "Shut the door."⁸⁸

⁸² *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 78.

⁸³ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 74.

⁸⁴ Johnson, Samuel, *Plans for a Dictionary of the English Language*, 1747. *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755.

⁸⁵ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 75.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 70.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 76.

These notes are of importance for two reasons: as indicating a technical effort toward versimilitude in dialogue; and as evidence of a minute, interested observation of country life.

THE RETURN TO NATURE

The argument in favor of country life, begins with Felicia's first letter in which she gives what the author intends as the point of view of a city-dweller touched by a first impression of the country. The story ends with a similar but more positive expression on Charlotte's part after a short visit to Felicia. In the beginning Felicia writes:

"I am now, I don't know how many miles from dear London, the seat of your joys; and must not expect for a long time to see again the Mall, the play-house, or the drawing-room, but I begin to fancy, that in a month or two I shall be reconciled to gloomy shades, tall trees, and murmuring brooks, and all the sylvan scenes which surround me; and even to cease to regret my distance from the genteel diversions of the gay and polite world; for if plain and simple nature can appear agreeable, it must be here where she shows herself in all her beauties. What a change have I already undergone! I arise at least three or four hours sooner than I ever did in my life before; and even go to bed long before midnight. Instead of the rattling coaches, I now hear only the rustling of leaves, or the warbling of birds; and instead of rich perfumes, my senses are regaled with the milder fragrance of nature.

Nay, prithee, my dear, don't laugh at me; I am yet neither poet, nor lover, nor do I find that I am in the least danger of being them. You, I know, cannot perceive any charms in such a rude retreat, fit to engage the attention of a fine lady. Here are no powdered beaus or gilt equipages, none of the splendid allurements, with which ladies of your vivacity are apt to be captivated; but for my part a natural tincture of gravity may possibly make me more easily support the absence of what your gayer disposition may induce you to consider the very essence of happiness."⁸⁹

Soon afterwards, in a much more ardent account of a country walk, a description notable for a few specific details, she makes at one point a satirical comparison between natural beauty and the artifices of city life:

"Yesterday Amelia and I set out on foot as soon as we had dined, after having given orders for the coach to fetch us back in the evening. The day was exceedingly fine; and the air rendered cool and refreshing by a gentle breeze, which waved the yellow corn, that opening in a narrow path gave us an easy and delightful passage; while the bearded ears hung their heavy heads

⁸⁹ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 3-4.

surcharged with myriads of glittering pearls, the fruits of a hasty shower, which before we had set out had refreshed the earth, and embalmed the air with a fragrance infinitely more pleasing than that which arises from the powder'd toupée of an accomplish'd beau, or the odors which scent your ladyship's gloves. . . . I saw the farmer whom I had given so seasonable relief with honest front giving orders to his servants. . . . He perceived me, when with a humble scrape and grateful look, he silently express'd his acknowledgments."⁹⁰

Finally, at the end of the book, Charlotte writes of the scenes amid which she finds Felicia:

"I am now in a new world, and three months is surely little enough to form a judgment, where everything I hear is as great a novelty as if I had been transported to some unknown region. Conceive if you can how surprising it must be to me, who never beheld anything but the splendors, or as I now chuse to call them, the tedious ceremonies of a court, to meet with artless simplicity and plain dressed truth, instead of polite flattery and high strained compliment; and, in the room of every gaudy folly, to behold pure nature and white robed innocence, and felicity arising from strict conformity to their dictates. . . .

But after all, you can't imagine, Madam, what a rustic creature this Felicia has grown; why, she is such a walker, I can't keep pace with her half the length of a small field. I laugh at her activity and mimic her country stride, while she, with the greatest good humour, ridicules my mincing step, and endeavours to put me out of conceit with some little peculiarities, which she calls affectations. Mr. Manly has indeed every perfection my lovely friend has attributed to him: believe me he has nothing of the swain, but simplicity and an artless heart; nothing of the courtier but the uneffected ease and freedom of his behaviour; and such an esteem I have already entertained for him, that I had rather hear him talk, than listen to the compliments of the finest beau in christendom. . . .

It is now, Madam, that I begin to live, to know myself, and to know the human mind, which in this place appears stripped of every disguise. True felicity dwells here; here is peace and joy. I taste the delights of the most sprightly and improving conversation; I read, I give full scope to my reflections; and these enjoyments alternately fill up my time. I sometimes venture to walk out alone, and, wrapt in sober contemplation, trace the hidden recesses of my own heart.

Could you believe it? I am grown a very enthusiast. I fall in rapture at the lovely face of nature. And were you to see me, when I walk in the garden, or the adjacent fields, or when, to en-

⁹⁰ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 192.

large the landscape, I view from the turrets, the wide prospect stretching in a long level, till, resembling a distant sea, it mingles with the clouds; were you in these moments, to hear my rhapsodies, and be a witness of my extravagancies, even you, with all your partiality for me, would be tempted to think me mad."⁹¹

AN EDUCATIONAL NOVEL

The educational theory comes for the most part at the end of the book⁹² after the birth of Felicia's child. Earlier, however, there are several sympathetic, and comparatively natural, descriptions of children in the course of the story, which stand out as unusual in the literature of the period.⁹³ Felicia reports that "Education, Madam, is a daily topic of discourse, a subject to us the most interesting. . . . Lucius is so fond of it, that he talks of little else; he is continually quoting to me the best authors on the subject."⁹⁴

Lucius indulges in what modern pedagogy would term "Child Study." Felicia writes:

"Lucius is now engaged in an employment that you will doubtless imagine to be very visionary. He is studying the history of man from his most early infancy. And as his son is much too young to express his ideas in any other way, but by the traces of his countenance and by inarticulate sounds, he examines these with a particular attention, in order to discover the strength of his perceptions and the progress of his ideas. This employment is extremely suited to his philosophic mind. Though I must confess that it sometimes makes me laugh, to see the assiduous care with which he endeavours to trace the impressions made on the little features of a face, which nature has scarcely finished, but which, however, sufficiently describes wonder, pleasure, and pain. From this study Lucius proposes to derive the greatest advantages, he will have an early knowledge of a heart, in the happiness of which he is most

⁹¹ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 310.

⁹² Vol. II, appeared the year after the birth of Mrs. Collyer's son: *The Dic. Nat. Biog.*, IV, p. 841 speaks of "Collyer, Joseph (1748-1827), the younger, engraver, born in London on 14 Sept. 1748, was the son of Joseph Collyer (d. 1776) q.v. and Mary Collyer (d. 1763) q.v." This fact indicates that the book reflects the author's personal interests and opinions. It also suggests the reason for the shift from the religious purpose of vol. I to the educational purpose of vol. II.

⁹³ *Fel. to Charl.*, I, 147, 124, 164.

⁹⁴ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 285. "Locke on Education, pp. 34-46" is quoted in another connection, I, 40-41. Compare Pamela's elaborate analysis of Locke's educational doctrine. *Works of Samuel Richardson*, (ed. Leslie Stephen; London: 1883) vol. III, Letters XLIII, XCXCVII.

nearly concerned; and by this discover the degrees and bent of the passions, the strength of the moral taste, and determine with the greatest evidence, this important truth, whether there are any seeds of vice implanted in the heart. A doctrine contended by many learned and good men, with as much heat and zeal as if vice was the highest glory and perfection of human nature."⁹⁵

And then follow certain items in regard to the proper care of infants which specifically cover Rousseau's own ground:

"So assiduous is he already in this task, that he has even interfered in my choice of a nursery-maid, and prevailed upon me to make this office worth the attendance of a person of solidity and understanding, one of a tolerable education, and of a sober reputable family. And this was the more necessary as she is obliged to deviate from the common practices, and to regulate her actions by his, or my directions, in the minutest particulars. He is such a friend to nature, that he will not suffer her⁹⁶ to be constrained; the body must not be bound up with rollers or with the heat of flannel, be used with a mistaken delicacy, or too closely to be preserved from the inclemency of the weather. But I must not enter into particulars. Only this I shall say, that he is so unfashionably polite, as to consider the mother's suckling her own child, as one of the indispensable obligations of nature; as a duty that can never be transferred to another, except in a case of utmost necessity: and, indeed, had I been as adverse to conviction on this head, as the gay fine lady at court, I must have either renounced all pretensions to reason, or suffered myself to own the force of his arguments."⁹⁷

In his efforts to "cultivate the understanding, or, as Mr. Thompson expresses it, To teach the young idea how to shoot," Lucius is well within the fields of modern pedagogy and ethics: He says:

"For some time it can consist in preserving the confused, undistinguishing capacity of infancy from receiving bad impressions: and

⁹⁵ Ibid, II, 277-8.

⁹⁶ The reference here is to a natural daughter of Lucius's (whose existence is ingeniously explained so as to reflect no discredit upon the hero), whom Felicia undertakes to bring up. See a similar situation in *Pamela*, op. cit., Letters XLII, LXIII, LXXXVII.

⁹⁷ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 278-9. Compare Pamela's discussions, especially as regards the mother as nurse, op. cit., III, 48ff.; the clothing of the infant, Ibid., 296; and the selection of servants and tutors, Ibid., 306. M. Jusserand points out that Lyly in *Euphues and his Euphoebus* anticipates both Richardson and Rousseau at several of these points, particularly as to mother's nursing their own children. *Euphues*, (ed. Arber; London: 1900) p. 128ff. *Euphues* was reprinted in modernized form in 1718. *The English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare*. (London: 1890) pp. 130, 141.

here the care ought, in his opinion, to begin with life itself. The tender brain must not be disturbed, nor the mind, in its first exertions, be startled by loud or sudden noises. This care increases as the mind enlarges; and it still continues capable of receiving impressions from objects of terror, these must be industriously excluded. . . . He proposes to dress up morality and the sublimest truths of natural religion, in the easy language of infancy; and by degrees to pour in more and more light as the understanding enlarges, and the mind grows more and more capacious; and by encouraging the restless curiosity natural to children, give incessant employment to their rational faculties. He considers English as the most important of all the languages to an Englishman. His child, he says, shall study all its beauties, learn to read with a grace, and if possible to write with elegance, to adapt his language to his sentiments, and to express his thoughts with ease and fluency; to form his style, and to settle his judgments, by a careful attention to the works of the most celebrated English authors; to be taught to point out their beauties, to comment on the noble sentiment, to relish, even to rapture, the tender beauties of *Spencer*, the lightning of *Shakespeare*, and the shining glory of *Milton*.

"The languages he considers only as the key to further knowledge. . . . he would make the dry task of words delightful, by a continual acquisition of agreeable sensations, and improved ideas. He would please himself with hearing the voice of unprejudiced nature, of a mind unbiassed with the forms of thinking that prevail amongst mankind, decide in what consists the merit of such and such an action; he would hear the tongue of innocence explain the glory or infamy of an *Alexander*, a *Trajan*, or a *Domitian*; he would cherish and fix the just sentiment, would improve the random thought, and where the judgment failed, would set it right. How delightful must this exercise of the faculties be to a child! To be led by its own reflections to a constant series of new ideas—how manly, how rational the entertainment!"⁹⁸

We feel here that *Mrs. Collyer* is not only anticipating the educational theories of *Brooke*, *Day*, and *Miss Edgeworth* at the end of the eighteenth century, but we seem also to catch glimpses of the propaganda of other pedagogical prophets, who, in spite of tribulation and abuse have tried, like *Lucius*, to "make the most rugged steps to learning pleasant."

Charlotte becomes an ardent disciple of this educational zeal. She writes:

"If it should please the director of all events to suffer me to be safely delivered of a boy, where shall I find a tutor like him? I

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 283-4.

would not for worlds deny him the happiness of being brought up with his son. . . . with what pleasant sympathy should Felicia and I behold the two prattling infants, daddling before us, through the garden or the field, while we, with hearts filled to the brim with maternal love, and social friendship, walk slowly after, talking of refined delights, and raising our souls on the wings of heavenly affection and gratitude."⁹⁹

Yet Mr. Cross writes that "the first of the English pedagogic romances was written by Henry Brooke, whose *Fool of Quality* appeared in parts during the years 1766-70."¹⁰⁰

Thus in its significance as a religious Novel of Purpose, a Pedagogic Romance, a Novel of Feeling, a Novel of Manners, and a reflection of the "Back to Nature" movement, *Felicia to Charlotte* seems an early illustration of the doctrine enunciated by Mme. de Staël fifty years later, which M. Texte sums up: "Moeurs et lois, littérature et religion, toutes ces parties de la civilisation soutiennent entre elles des rapports, ne peuvent pas être séparées l'une de l'autre, les rendent en quelque sorte, pour parler le langage de l'algebra, fonctions l'une de l'autre."¹⁰¹

At two points this early romantic novel seems to question previous assumptions: (1) Has the influence of Rousseau on the sentimental and didactic novel been overestimated? Has it been too generally accepted as the inevitable source of many romantic phenomena, to the neglect of the influence on the novel of Thomson, and, to a lesser degree, of other early romantic poets? (2) Were the Novel of Feeling, the Novel of Purpose, the Educational Novel, etc., perhaps not so late a development as is commonly supposed? May not further investigation of the mass of minor fiction of the eighteenth century, material of which as yet we have not even complete bibliographical record,¹⁰² reveal a considerable number of other novels, like this one, tending to show that later varieties have sprung from an earlier sowing?¹⁰³

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⁹⁹ *Fel. to Charl.*, II, 302-3.

¹⁰⁰ *The Development of the Novel* (N. Y. 1900) 85.

¹⁰¹ *Texte*, 178.

¹⁰² At present the most complete bibliographies of early fiction are a Columbia dissertation by Miss Charlotte Morgan, *The Rise of the Novel of Manners, A Study of English Prose Fiction between 1600 and 1640*. The Columbia Univer-

sity Press, 1911; and Mr. Arundell Esdaile's *A List of English Tales and Prose Romances, Printed before 1740*. London, 1912.

¹⁰³ A statement of Professor Raleigh's includes the two points with which this novel might lead us to take issue, to some extent: "The school of novelists that cultivated sentiment for its own sake became rapidly merged late in the century, and especially after the French Revolution, in the theoretic school that cultivated sentiment in order to show how superior are the impulses of the heart to the artificial canons of society. Thus the history of the sentimental school from Richardson onwards, through the French writers that he influenced, loses itself later in the history of the Romantic revival, of which it really formed a part. For Rousseau, the great precursor of the Romantic movement, enlisted sentiment in the service of theory, and from this time onward, they are seldom apart. Op. cit. 202-3.